

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO



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NEWS RELEASE

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Councilmember Atkins Announces Community Development Block Grant Allocations

Community Development, Neighborhood Revitalization, ADA Upgrades, Micro-Enterprise, Affordable Housing Are Top Priorities

SAN DIEGO-Third District Councilmember Toni Atkins announced the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocations for Fiscal Year 2004 on Tuesday, May 20, and the main themes of this year's funding decisions could be summed up as neighborhood revitalization, small business enhancement, ADA upgrades, community development, and support for affordable housing. Council District Three will receive \$2,047,673 in funds from the federal government this year under the CDBG program.

With more than \$7.3 million dollars in funding requests to sift through, Councilmember Atkins decided on 56 separate allocations totaling \$957,000, which was the amount available for this fiscal year after taking into account project management fees as well as previously committed HUD Section 108 loans for the Mid-City Police Station, the City Heights Urban Village, and the newly establish District Three infrastructure loan.

Councilmember Atkins was pleased to support three citywide projects recommended by the City Manager's office. Two separate Americans With Disabilities Act projects received the councilmember's support, including \$30,333 for ADA transition projects, and \$72,222 for the ADA retrofit of the City Administration Building. Additionally, \$45,840 was allocated for the City's neighborhood code enforcement efforts.

The largest single allocation of \$425,000 represents the first of 12 annual payments on a \$3.7 million HUD Section 108 Infrastructure loan that will allow for the full and expedited funding of 11 major streetscape and neighborhood improvement projects throughout the district. A large part of these loan proceeds will go toward revitalizing the business districts along Adams Avenue in Normal Heights and University Avenue in North Park, and will complete the landscaping of medians between Texas Street and 30th Street on El Cajon Boulevard in North Park. Additionally, over \$1 million will be spent on sidewalk improvements under the District Three 75/25 cost share program, installation of new mid-block street lights, and conversion of street lights from yellow to white, high pressure sodium lights.

"By grouping these projects together and paying for them at one time through this loan, we'll be able to provide the citizens of District Three real and substantial results quicker, and throughout the district," said Councilmember Atkins.

A longtime supporter of small businesses, which are crucial to the District Three economy, Councilmember Atkins made a special outreach to organizations that foster micro-enterprise, small business, and employment development efforts in underserved communities. Allocations were made to ACCION (\$10,000), Alliance for African Assistance (\$20,000), and the Union of Pan Asian Communities (\$30,000) for their micro-enterprise and multi-cultural development projects. Funding also went to diverse groups such as the Supreme Council of the Somali Community (\$10,000) for their African American Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Development/International Trade Center at Southwestern Community College (\$8,000) for their ABC's for Small Business program, Winning Opportunities for Responsible Contractors (\$5,000) for their WORC program, Black Contractors Association of San Diego (\$8,000) for Project Fresh Start-BCA Youthbuild, the Latino Builders Industry Association (\$8,000) for their Third District Community Development Project, the San Diego Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (\$5,000) for the DEVO/Micro-enterprise Outreach Program, and the Business Improvement District Council (\$5,000) for the BID Property Development Initiative.

"There are a good number of devoted activists who do incredible work for our underserved communities in the area of micro-enterprise development and business retention. Small businesses continue to be the backbone of our older, urban neighborhoods, and for many in our refugee and immigrant populations, micro-enterprise is the one real chance they have of providing a good life for their families," said Councilmember Atkins. "I will continue to do whatever I can to create a small-business-friendly climate throughout not just District Three, but the entire city."

As the leader on the Council in the fight for affordable housing, Councilmember Atkins also directed funds to help spur first-time homeownership and ensure equal access to housing throughout the district. Toward this goal, \$80,000 was allocated to Community Housing Works for their Home Ownership Education and Lending Program, and \$10,000 was given to the Fair Housing Council of San Diego to help fund fair housing services that address unlawful housing discrimination.

Three community development corporations (CDCs) were also funded at substantial levels for their core funding needs, which helps keep their doors open. The City Heights CDC received \$80,000 for its Rebuild City Heights 2004 projects, the Greater Golden Hill CDC was granted \$40,000 for its Golden Hill Revitalization programs, and the University Heights CDC was given \$30,000 for its core funding.

"Community development corporations serve a unique, nationally recognized role in community revitalization. In addition to the many neighborhood services they offer, they provide housing and resident support services and strive to develop new affordable housing units," said Councilmember Atkins. "The fact that they're governed by neighborhood boards only adds to their effectiveness."

Funds were also allocated to the Adams Avenue Business Association (\$20,000), El Cajon Boulevard Business Improvement Association (\$20,000), and North Park Main Street (\$20,000) for projects other than those already covered by the HUD 108 infrastructure loan.

Specific neighborhoods also received funding for specialized projects. The South Park Action Council was granted \$15,000 toward its ongoing community revitalization efforts, the Azalea Park Neighborhood Association was given \$18,000 for its Neighborhood Identification Project, and the Cherokee Point Neighborhood Association received \$20,000 for the construction of a new playground.

"The business associations and neighborhood groups in District Three continue to bring forward vital, community-enhancing projects year after year, and I'm more than happy to help fund as many of them

as possible," said Councilmember Atkins. "Hopefully, these CDGB funds will help bring their projects to fruition."

Three Balboa Park institutions were also given funding. The World Beat Center was allocated \$15,000 for its restoration project, the American Indian Culture Center was given \$8,000 toward its museum project, and the Balboa Park Tennis Club was granted \$15,000 toward the construction of a new tennis practice wall.

Other notable allocations include \$45,000 for pro-active code enforcement in Council District Three, \$20,000 for Senior Community Center's Broadway Center rehabilitation, and the addition of three new HUD Section 108 loans to help support a new building for the San Diego Food Bank (\$10,000 for 10 years), the new San Diego Refugee Center for The Vietnamese Federation of San Diego (\$20,000 for 10 years), and the renovation of The San Diego LGBT Community Center (\$20,000 for 10 years).

"Even with the limited resources we had this year, I'm confident that we used these funds wisely so that a diverse group of worthwhile organizations and projects can help continue the dramatic revitalization of our older urban neighborhoods in Council District Three," said Councilmember Atkins. "I believe that the true intent of the federal CDBG program will be met, and in many cases exceeded by these allocations."

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